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disturbances, occasioned by the discussion of the slavery question, the institution was at length broken up, and Dr. Beecher and Professor Stowe returned to the eastern States, where they now reside.

In addition to Dr. Beecher's popularity as a preacher, he has distinguished himself as a writer. His six sermons on the causes, consequences, and cure of intemperance, greatly extended his reputation in the United States, and made him favourably known in England and, through the medium of translations, in other parts of Europe. His lectures on "Atheism, considered Theologically and Politically," have also been extensively circulated in America and in England. These lectures, for sound and eloquent reasoning, are not surpassed. A uniform edition of his entire works has recently been published, carefully revised by himself.

In 1846 Dr. Beecher paid a visit to England, and took part in the deliberations of the temperance reformers in the "World's Temperance Convention," held in London. During his short stay, he endeared himself to many by the patriarchal simplicity of his manners; by the vigour which he on public occasions, and by the gentlemanly and Christian tenour of his whole deportment. He has not at present, as we understand, the charge of any congregation, but he preaches occasionally, and assists in the deliberations of his brethren at their stated and public gatherings. He is still hale and hearty, and, to use the language of one who knows him well, "he does not fail to justify his claim to the title of 'the old man eloquent.'"

ADVENTURES OF A NIGHT IN MESSINA.

It was a sparkling summer day when I first saw the Straits of Messina, coming in a crazy little steamer from Naples. The shores of Italy and Sicily, even when they neared on either hand, were obscure with excessive light, and threw up their tall, transparent forms into a sky inexpressibly tranquil. A number of Italians on board, excited by the misunderstood promises of the hero of the moment, Pio Nono, ventured almost to express their enthusiasm; and some bold spirits actually whispered that the lovely land before us was not destined for ever to languish under the stupifying shadow of despotism. A glance from a dignified personage—valet-de-chambre to the late king—repressed, it is true, any further patriotic demonstrations; but this afternoon was a pleasant one, and all on board were in a cheerful mood, when we passed between Scylla and Charybdis—no longer terrible—and shooting across an expanse of little boiling waves, entered the harbour of Messina, just as the bold eastern slopes of the island were left in gloom by the dipping sun, that still shone, however, brightly on the opposite shore of Reggio.

A number of sleek-looking police ferrets were soon on board, and after incomprehensible delays we were permitted to land—not, of course, on the esplanade, but in a sombre police-office, where our passports were a second time examined. They had already been overhauled on board, and I must not forget to state that your humble servant was closely questioned as to whether he had with him any books, any newspapers, or any letters of introduction, and was only allowed to pass unmolested on a negative answer. Once escaped into the streets, we were at liberty to consider ourselves out of the way of interference; but I am sure every one of us was carefully tracked to his hotel.

First, of course, we dined; and then sallied forth to view the town, at that period unvisited by the amiable General Filangion. It was a pretty place, not unlike a modern repetition of Pompeii—neat streets, neat houses,—but everything on a small scale. Everybody seemed to be taking an evening stroll, or breathing the balmy air in balconies or at windows. Provincial dandies were smoking their cigarettes, or taking their ices at the doors of coffee-houses; ladies in long rows, attended by their cavaliers, filled the streets sometimes from side to side; Neapolitan officers strutted up and down with the ludicrous importance of servants of petty powers. It was a gay and animated scene.

During our walk my companion remembered that many years ago he had known an English merchant of Messina, and had indeed, as he informed us in a general way, been under great obligations to him. "It will be polite," he said, "to call. Come with me, and you will perhaps be interested." We inquired for the house of Signor Williams, and after a little beating about the bush succeeded in finding it in a retired quarter, near the Syracusan gate. A large garden surrounded it; there was a bell at the little doorway under the shadow of some trees; we rang several times without receiving any answer, and were about to give up, when a wicket opened, and a voice, somewhat agitated, asked in Italian what we wanted. We announced ourselves in English. "I do not know you, gentlemen," was the reply in the same language, slightly accented; "but I beg your pardon for keeping you waiting—Come in, come in."

The door opened, and a person ushered us into a covered walk that led down the centre of the garden to the house. He had no light; and after having carefully shut the door, begged us to follow him quickly. We did so, somewhat surprised at this reception, and soon found ourselves in a very handsomely furnished apartment, in presence of a good-looking young man, who, with considerable embarrassment, now asked us what our business might be.

My friend had no sooner explained than a great load seemed taken off the young man's mind. "Your visit was for my father," he said; but it is now five years since I have lost him. My grief is naturally re-awakened by this sudden appeal to his name; but time of course heals all wounds, and without troubling you with my private feelings, I welcome you and your friend very gladly, and hope you will pass the evening with me."

We were soon comfortably installed on large, soft divans, very like eastern ones, smoking our cigars; but such is the nature of man, that we were not at all satisfied with our reception. True, the young merchant made us feel that he was glad to see us—indeed our presence seemed gradually to inspirit and enliven him; but there were certain mysterious circumstances that excited our curiosity, and made us believe that a drama was going on around us of which we were not even to be spectators. These circumstances, in addition to those already mentioned, were the absence of all servants, and the death-like stillness of the whole mansion.

In the course of conversation my friend happened to insist with more earnestness than he had done at first on the services which had been rendered him by the late Mr. Williams, and on the affectionate regard which he had for his memory. Camillo—such was the young man's name—listened with eager attention, and after some hesitation said—"May I venture to ask if the gratitude you bear the father is in any degree extended to the family, and whether—I am almost ashamed to appeal to you in this way—you would be disposed to assist me in a very delicate affair." My friend, who is a fine, warm-hearted fellow, promised everything that could be desired, and thus induced Camillo to tell his story nearly in the following words:—

"That you may perfectly understand me, I must premise that, inheriting the position of my father, I have always mixed in the very best circles of Messina, which seem to me, as I know no other, very brilliant and agreeable. Especially, I have had access to the house of the governor, Il Visconte —, where I have spent delightful evenings at conversazioni and balls. Up till within a year from this time, my life was perfectly delightful and exempt from care of any kind. I had even become fat and lazy. All this was destined to change upon the arrival of—of—(there was some awkward hesitation here) the daughter of the governor, just released from school at Naples. Without consideration of consequences, I was so foolish as to fall in love with her at once. (As he said this in an off-hand way, Camillo watched our countenances, to see if we thought him ridiculous; but noticing a sympathising expression, proceeded with greater freedom.) Yes, gentlemen, I loved her at once, and have loved her ever since with unalterable affection; and perhaps I should retract what a false

shame induced me to say—that I was foolish to admit this feeling. Love elevates man; and I may say that it has elevated me from a frivolous hanger-about at parties to something more respectable in my own eyes at least. Passion has taken the place of every mere petty sentiment; and I am a better man, because I feel more strongly. It might have been more prudent to look in a different direction, but having once looked it was impossible to turn away.

"I loved, and my love was returned; as with the ingenuity of affection I soon divined, although it was long before I could obtain an avowal. You will excuse me if I pass over in silence scenes the memory of which will gild my declining years, even if they be passed in solitude and misfortune—the stolen interviews in the myrtle grove, the hurried meetings in the portico—suffice it to say, that for several months I dreamed on in a state of ineffable delight, until at length—exactly as in a romance—the dreadful news came to me that *Mia Speranza* had been promised in marriage to Alberto—the son of a distinguished general. A few nights afterwards, I was requested by the unsuspecting Visconte to read Shakespeare to himself and his daughters, and designedly chose the first act of "*Romeo and Juliet*." The worthy man, after divers ecstatic exclamations of delight, fell gently asleep; and whilst he slumbered, it was then and there agreed that the first part of the play—God grant the end not likewise!—should be played over again. I shall spare you a great deal of unnecessary detail by saying that it was so, and that a month ago, by the assistance of good father Buonaventure, I became the husband of *Speranza*."

Camillo, who was a capital straightforward fellow, with a good deal of peculiar simplicity about him, could not conceal the admiration he felt for himself in the character of Romeo. Had he been a better narrator, we should have preferred hearing him tell his story otherwise than by hint and inuendo; but he had a sad tendency to weave lengthy phrases, and it would have required a very piquant manner to render a new history of a clandestine marriage interesting. We were therefore obliged to him for putting us at once in possession of the fact; and wished, with some impatience and no little anxiety, to learn the part we were to be called on to play. The truth came out at length; and—let me confess it at once—I was, in homely phrase, quite "down in the mouth" when I first heard it.

The ingenious Camillo—who, under other circumstances, would no doubt have been more considerate—proceeded to say that a definitive elopement was about to take place that night. He had ordered a ship which he had chartered to linger near a little cove, on the coast towards Catania, and was to start at midnight with his lovely bride—for he assured us she was lovely. In spite of every precaution, however, he feared that their flight would be too soon discovered, that some accident might delay them on the road, that the vessel might not be able to reach the rendezvous in time. These reflections, he said, had so disturbed him, that he had almost resolved to postpone the attempt, rendered necessary, however, by the approaching arrival of Signor Alberto, and advisable for many other reasons which he allowed us to guess. Our arrival, the warm protestations of my friend, and, I suppose, my benevolent looks, had suggested to him an idea which for coolness may be pronounced unparalleled. Passion, however, is proverbially selfish, and many things may be forgiven a young man who has married a beautiful girl under such very awkward circumstances.

Camillo proposed, then, in the first place, that my friend, being very tall and stout, should return quickly to his hotel and go to bed—an easy task,—and sleep—it would be difficult after hearing so interesting and so unfinished an adventure; but, in the second place, as I was about his height, and strongly resembled him—this was a compliment, and acknowledged by a bow—he requested me—with a million of excuses which I was to be so good as to suppose expressed—to dress in his garments, and sham an elopement with Paulina, the waiting-maid of *Speranza*, in another direction! Let me protest that I am not aware of my being sufficiently a simpleton in appear-

ance to authorize a perfect stranger, however romantically situated, to make me such a proposition; and yet, it may be—for, whether excited by the heavy Sicilian wine I had drank at dinner, or by the bottle of delicious *Lachryma Christi*, which, I had forgotten to say, Camillo had uncorked for us; or won by the winning and imploring smile of our host; or induced by a natural tendency to mix myself up in sentimental adventures, I know not—but having recovered from my first surprise, I actually agreed to do what was required of me. Positively, however, I never thought once of Paulina, and, for ought I cared, she might have been a very hag.

It is necessary to add that Camillo represented the whole thing as very easy, and without responsibility. I was to go out by the Palermo gate, follow the road some distance, be taken by Paulina to a place of surety, and put in the way of returning to Messina, as if I had been merely out for a morning's walk. The cunning fellow even hinted that this would be a capital opportunity for me to see the beautiful scenery, and very nearly persuaded me that he was entitled to my gratitude for a delightful trip. My friend, it is true, timidly suggested that I might get into a scrape, and offered to shrink very small and take my place; but I was too enthusiastic to listen to this, and silenced him by saying he had designs on Paulina—at which he blushed and gave up the point.

Camillo told us that he had purposely chosen a night when all his servants had asked permission to go to a wedding, except one, who was in waiting with a couple of horses, and being an Englishman might be trusted. He was delighted with the increased prospect of success now presented to him, and after a few awkward excuses, quite dismissed from his mind all consideration of inconvenience to me. Time advanced, and near midnight he went out several times, and at last remained watching at the door. My friend took occasion of his absence to chide me for my rashness, and accuse himself of having brought me into trouble; but I had gone too far to retreat, and silenced him with the philosophical observation, that it would be all one a thousand years hence.

At length Camillo returned with two closely-veiled ladies in peasant costumes, one of whom he introduced as his wife. She was a charming, delicate-looking, frightened creature. Her face told nothing of the resolution required to undertake such a step as an elopement, and I guessed at once that she had been led on from step to step in spite of herself. In her whole demeanour was evident the fondest love, nay, veneration, for Camillo, who, for his part, seemed almost to lose his senses and to forget that the time for action had come.

Paulina was obliged to interfere, and remind him that every minute, as she expressed it, forcibly, if incorrectly, was worth its weight in gold. Paulina!—a magnificent Sicilian beauty—with eyes that would scorch up half a dozen northern lovers, lips somewhat massive, but splendid in expression, a form not large but full, and elastic like steel,—"*My part*," thought I, as she urged the necessity of instant flight, "is not so very disagreeable."

"Paulina," said Camillo; "you are right; but listen to me. You have resolved not to accompany us, and to go and join your Vanneth in the mountains, where you know you will be safe. If you remember, you proposed that he should come and fetch you, and that he should pass with you through the gates disguised in my dress. We had not been able to carry out this plan; but this young gentleman has agreed to take Vannetto's place. Go, then; I trust you to manage everything well. Your lover will not be jealous."

Paulina looked at me and muttered "*poveretto*;" but whether it was at some danger I was likely to run, or at the idea of my exciting her Vannetto's jealousy, I cannot say. However, everything was soon arranged; Camillo, who had been fidgetty for some time, carried away his *Speranza*, after we had each pressed her delicately small hand; and my friend, who looked very admiringly at Paulina, reluctantly took the road to the hotel. Here I was, then, in the very midst of the adventure; and I can assure you my heart beat rather precipitately as I donned the broad hat and spacious cloak provided for me.